beans, which they leave to take care of themselves. When they think that the crops ought to be matured, they send a messenger to find out. If these inspectors bring good news, they will return to their settlements and look after their fields. [Sánchez Labrador, 1910–17, vol. 2, p. 258.]

The first rains of the season, usually in late September or October, gave the signal for planting. Lands selected for cultivation were first cleared of trees, underbrush, and grass with an ax (originally made of stone but in post-Columbian times of iron). The trees and bushes were then burnt and the ashes scattered over the field. With a digging stick, *ilome'i*, made from the wood of the "palo santo," the cultivator would then dig the ground, squatting on his heels, moving from place to place until the field was turned. With the coming of the Spaniards the Terena claim they began to use iron hoes and even a simple iron-shod wooden plow drawn by oxen. After the field was prepared the Terena waited for the first rains before putting in the seed. "We waited," they say, "until the first flowers appeared on the trees."

The above information checks closely with what Sánchez Labrador observed in the middle of the eighteenth century:

The Chaná are a good-humoured, modest people. They have a peculiar way of cultivating the land. With the above-mentioned spades they dig and weed, not as the Spaniards do, but sitting down. Their spades have handles one and one-half yards in length. The Chaná sit down and work with their spades as far as they can reach and then move along until all the land has been prepared for planting. They cultivate manioc, maize, beans, squashes, sweet potatoes, tobacco, and some cotton. [Ibid., vol. 2, pp. 291–292.]

The economic unit was the family or household, which consisted of the husband and wife, the children, and, in some cases, the sons-in-law. The clearing and digging of the land were performed by men. Women and children assisted in planting, weeding, and harvesting. Cotton seeds, for instance, could be planted only by women.

The principal crops grown by the Terena were maize, sweet and bitter manioc, cará, beans, sweet-potatoes, pumpkins, gourds, sugarcane, cotton, and tobacco.

Maize (soporó).—The Terena distinguished at least three kinds of maize: A long-eared yellow maize called *hianketi-soporó*, a white variety called *heoputiti-soporó*, and a mixed-colored ear called *kuati-soporó*. Maize was planted at the beginning of the rains and was ready for use 3 to 6

months later, depending upon the type and the conditions of rainfall. Fresh maize was roasted before a fire or made into porridge or into cakes called *shipa*. A fermented beverage was also prepared from newly harvested maize. Ears of maize were also dried and stored in the house to be later crushed in a mortar and used for making porridge.

Manioc (chupú).—While in the Chaco, the Terena cultivated both the sweet manioc, *eshóti-chupú*, and the bitter manioc, *suati-chupú*. Manioc was planted at the same time as maize and was weeded to give the young plants a good start. Sweet manioc matured in about 8 months and bitter manioc in about 12 months. Bitter manioc was thus a valuable food reserve, as it became available during the lean months of September and October.

Sweet manioc was eaten boiled and baked or cut up and boiled with meat. Bitter manioc, however, had to be processed in order to rid the tubers of their poisonous acids. The tubers were first cleaned, then shredded with a wooden grater. The pulp was then rolled in a cotton cloth which was wrung with the aid of two sticks, one at each end of the cloth press. The pulp was then rolled into small cakes, *kihi*, or large cakes, *kapapé*, and baked until the bitter taste disappeared.

Sweetpotatoes (kohé).—The sweetpotato was a favorite food of the Terena and was planted in large quantities. The Terena recognized three varieties: A white variety known as *kepuiti-kohé*, a yellow variety, *kiati-kohé*, and a purple variety, *karaiti-kohé*. Although sweetpotatoes could be planted throughout the year, the biggest plantings were made at the beginning of the rainy season. Sweetpotatoes planted in October were ready for use in March.

Sweetpotatoes were eaten boiled, or baked on hot coals or in earth ovens. A hole in the ground was filled with wood and after the wood had burnt down to coals, the potatoes were placed in it, covered with soil and left for a day or two.

Maize, sweetpotatoes, and manioc were the staple subsistence crops of the Terena. In addition to being substantial foods, these crops became available for use over a period stretching from January to October. Maize came in from January to March, sweetpotatoes from March to July, manioc from August to October.

[Banana] Village]

pole is attached which, when drawn around in a circle, turns the three cylinders. Although two or three men can turn the cylinders, a horse is customarily hitched to the pole. 257

While the cylinders are turning, a man forces pieces of cane between the cylinders where the juice is expelled and later drips into cans or wooden buckets below. The juice is known as "garapa" and is drunk fresh from the machine, the usual custom being to drink it through the teeth to keep out the dirt. To prepare sirup, or "rapadura," the juice is boiled over a fire in flat iron basins about 4 feet in diameter. The first product obtained is sirup, *mopó*, which is widely used domestically and is also sold. With further boiling, "rapadura," or brown ungranulated sugar, is obtained. This sugar is pressed into approximately 1-kilo blocks and is used as candy or for sweetening tea, coffee, and other foods. When the boiled juice is permitted to settle and the water to evaporate, black granulated raw sugar is obtained. The Terena customarily produce only sirup and ungranulated brown sugar. [272]

Maize.—As a food crop maize is definitely secondary to manioc. The Terena appear to grow a primitive type of maize having a long slender ear with yellow kernels. The other two types, one a short ear with yellow kernels and the other with reddish kernels, appear to be varieties developed by the Brazilians. Maize is planted in September and harvested in April. Usually it is planted in rows, although it is often found growing irregularly in the fields. Much of the crop is used green, the ears being boiled or roasted before a fire. Coarsely ground maize is used for making a thin gruel, *ehomoiú*, a porridge called *yukui*, or corn cakes known as *shipa*. After an ear of corn is husked, the kernels are removed and roughly ground in a wooden mortar. The coarse meal is then winnowed after which it is ready for use. 243 243 252

Sweetpotatoes.—The Terena grow three main types of sweetpotato: a yellow variety, a white variety, and a purple variety. The cuttings are set out in September and are ready for use in March and April. Sweetpotatoes are eaten boiled or baked. The Terena still bake sweetpotatoes in the old way. First a hole is dug in the ground and filled with firewood and lighted. When the fire has burned down to coals, the sweetpotatoes 249 252

[Bananal Village]

are put in and covered with soil and left for a day or two; when the oven is uncovered the tubers are well baked. Candy is sometimes made from sweetpotatoes by baking out the sirup. Sweetpotatoes are also treated like manioc when there are large quantities and it is feared they will decay—the potatoes are grated, the water is removed in a press, and the dry pulp is formed into cakes and baked in an oven. 244 252

Cará.—This yellow-skinned tuber, which looks like a yam but tastes like manioc, can be planted at any time of the year. It is used in soups and stews made with dried meat. 244 [262]

Beans.—The popular bean grown by the Terena is a small reddish-brown variety, known in Portuguese as "feijão miudo." This hardy bean, which matures in about 4 months, can be planted at any time of the year but does best when planted at the beginning of the rainy season. A creeping variety, known in Portuguese as "feijão rasteiro," is also planted although it does not grow well in this region. This variety of bean is planted in March and harvested in June. Beans are an important part of Terena diet and are eaten boiled, if possible with a piece of fat pork. Like the Brazilians, the Terena now eat boiled beans with rice. [262] [252]

Rice (nakati).—As has been mentioned, rice is an unreliable crop in this region owing to the uncertainty of rains. If the rains are heavy enough some rice will be planted in the lowlands surrounding Bananal. The planting period will vary from September to January or even February if the rains happen to be heavy in this month. The rice grown is of the dry-land variety, sown broadcast. 243

The scientific terms for the varieties of rice grown by the Terena were not obtained. They use the local Portuguese terms for the rice they grow, recognizing three varieties, namely, "catetinho," "arroz grande," and "amarelo." If the rains are sufficient, rice will mature in about 100 days after planting. Rice is harvested with a sickle, and after the sheaves are dry the heads are removed by beating the sheaf against the ground. Rice is husked as required for household use in the same wooden mortar used for husking maize. Rice is eaten boiled in the Brazilian fashion or boiled rice is made into cakes and baked. Sometimes rice is also eaten in the form of thin porridge. [262] [252]

although they no longer perform them. As one would expect, the ceremonial season opened at harvest time. This was a period of abundant food, enabling the people to remain in their villages. The fresh garden foods, no doubt, were a welcome change from stored foods, fish, game, wild roots, fruits, and herbs—besides adding vigor alike to the bodies of men, women, and children.

The cutting of the first ripened ears of maize was celebrated by dancing the *kochóvonuníti*. This masked dance was organized by one of the moiety chiefs at whose house the feasting took place. A number of men would repair to a temporary shelter where they painted themselves, put rhea feathers around their waists, glued cotton on their faces, and placed a net over their heads. After making themselves as frightening as possible the disguised dancers sallied forth. They went from door to door in the village telling the women and children that they were the ghosts of dead Indians, throwing sticks, and going through various antics. When the women and children saw the masked dancers they ran away and hid in real or imagined fright.

After tiring themselves the dancers went to the house of a *unati ashé*, or moiety chief, who supplied the dancers and others with honey beer. The dancers were supposed to drink until they could not remain on their feet. The more a man drank the more honor he gained in the eyes of his friends. This dance appears to have had a religious significance in the past. It was associated with the gathering of the first harvest and with the ghosts of the dead. It may be a very ancient Arawak feature dating from the time when the Terena were still predominantly agricultural.

On the day following the *kochóvonuníti*, the Terena played a game called *piritúti*. A man, selected for his marksmanship in throwing sticks, would dress, paint, and mask himself as on the day before. The game consisted in throwing sticks at other men who tried to approach him. The *piritúti*, or masked player, came into the village from the fields and hiding behind houses he would try to hit as many people as possible. The men of the village tried to approach within touching distance and if anyone touched the player he would be the winner. The game continued until someone was able to touch the *piritúti*. The Terena